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## **YOURS: Legislation puts 5G service on fast track**

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### For South Dakota, 5G Is Dependent on Smart Streamlining

When officials huddle in Washington to hash out laws that affect the country, it doesn't always seem like they have South Dakota in mind. Policymakers far too often regard communities located far from the coasts or large cities as afterthoughts. There's a ripple effect that results in resources and services often coming to us at a slower pace.

Thankfully, recent efforts such as the new Sioux Falls Tower and Communication's training center seek to upend this trend. Ongoing efforts by some leaders in Washington are also helping.

A bill introduced by our own Senator John Thune (R-S.D.) is an example and applies to fifth-generation wireless service — or 5G. The STREAMLINE Small Cell Deployment Act, as its name suggests, would streamline the onerous regulatory process for deploying small cells — the backpack-sized devices that must be widely deployed if we are to win the race to 5G and get it up throughout the nation.

The bipartisan bill, co-sponsored by Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI), would also require state and local jurisdictions to decide on small cell applications within a reasonable time frame of 60 to 90 days. This provides more than enough time to

decide on small devices that blend into the surrounding environment.

Additionally, the bill would ensure that governmental fees for small cell siting are competitive and reflect actual costs. All of these components will achieve significant progress in the United States' quest to win the global race to 5G.

Senator Thune's legislation is complemented by Commissioner Brendan Carr's ongoing efforts at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to achieve similar common-sense reform. Commissioner Carr spearheaded an order to expedite federal review standards for small cells in the spring, and he continues to search for ways to streamline other unnecessarily burdensome regulations.

For South Dakota, these forward-thinking policies are of particular importance. The rollout of next-generation technology tends to initially flow to urban, populous areas. If the costs of establishing 5G infrastructure are unreasonably high in these places, there will inevitably be more delay and fewer resources for the rest of the country — including South Dakota.



**New Rule in Sioux Falls, SD  
Leaves Drivers Fuming**

The progress underway at both the FCC and the Congress will help remedy this problem. National rules that streamline regulations will greatly reduce the time and financial resources it takes to approve and deploy essential digital infrastructure. The result is greater amounts of investment for South Dakotan communities — and sooner.

There are clearly encouraging developments at the federal level, but state and local leaders must also be sure to review standards that could harm South Dakota's 5G readiness. All levels of government ought to take every step possible to reduce barriers and encourage investment into 5G buildout.

The economic promise of 5G is a powerful incentive for simplifying these rules. 5G will be the launch pad of American innovation. Technologies that rely on many sophisticated connections and data transfers — such as virtual reality and driverless vehicles — will have the platform they require to become prevalent.

Leaders at the FCC and in Congress are putting forward the right proposals. With their success, South Dakota will take a sizeable leap toward the 5G era.

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